

Message Text

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S E C R E T CAIRO 08087

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR EG CD SO SU

SUBJECT: SADAT ON AFRICAN PROBLEMS

1. AT ONE POINT IN MY MARCH 11 MEETING WITH SADAT IN FAYOUM, HE REVERTED TO A THEME WHICH REMAINS VERY MUCH ON HIS MIND, NAMELY SOVIET-INSTIGATED ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA. WHILE THE UNRESOLVED ARAB/ISRAELI PROBLEM TROUBLED HIM, HE SAID HE WAS EVEN MORE WORRIED ABOUT THE SITUATION IN AFRICA. THIS SHOULD BE OUR PRINCIPAL CONCERN AND ARAB/ISRAELI PROBLEMS SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO DISTRACT US FROM THIS THREAT.

2. SADAT REPEATED WHAT HE HAD EARLIER TOLD ATHERTON: IN LESS THAN SIX MONTHS, HE ASSERTED, WE WILL SEE TROUBLE IN THE SUDAN FROM BOTH THE EAST AND THE WEST. AS WE KNEW, THE SUDAN IS PART OF EGYPT'S SECURITY PERIMETER AND GOE PREPARED TO FIGHT TO PREVENT TOPPLING OF MODERATE NUMAYRI REGIME.

3. THE SOVIET SURROGATE THREAT THROUGH LIBYA AND ETHIOPIA TO SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA, SADAT ASSERTED, IS VERY REAL. USG

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DOES NOT SEEM TO REALIZE THIS. FOR HIM, HOWEVER, AS AN AFRICAN, IT IS A PROBLEM "ON MY DOORSTEP." EGYPTIANS ARE ALREADY BEGINNING TO SPEAK ABOUT IT. HE WAS TROUBLED BY WHAT THEY ARE SAYING ABOUT LIKELY U.S. ATTITUDES. THE UNIVERSAL CONVICTION IS "THE AMERICANS WILL DO NOTHING."

4. CHADIAN PRESIDENT MALLOUM HAD SECRETLY SENT HIM A

MESSAGE SAYING NOTHING HAD COME OF HIS RECENT MEETING WITH QADHAFI IN SEBHA. A SECOND MEETING WILL BE HELD IN SEBHA LATER THIS MONTH, BUT MALLOUM THOUGHT IT TOO WILL BE STERILE. NUMAYRI, ASSISTED BY SOME "SAUDI PRESSURE," HAD PUSHED MALLOUM INTO MEETING WITH QADHAFI. IT HAD BEEN A "NAIVE" THING TO DO. BUT CHAD, HE FEARED, IS LIKELY TO HAVE TO KNUCKLE UNDER TO QADHAFI.

5. EGYPT, SADAT SAID, IF BACKED BY THE UNITED STATES, COULD CHANGE THE SITUATION IN AFRICA. FOR EXAMPLE, EGYPT COULD SEND FORCES TO HOLD BERBERA. ALSO, AS HE HAD PREVIOUSLY STATED, HE COULD POSITION HEAVY ARTILLERY ON THE SOMALI COAST WHICH COULD THREATEN THE SOVIET BASE AT SOQOTRA.

6. IF USG LOSES INFLUENCE AND IMAGE IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA, AS IT IS DOING, SADAT ASSERTED, THIS IS A DANGEROUS DEVELOPMENT FOR US AND FOR HIM. USG POSITION IN ARAB AND AFRICAN WORLDS WILL BE DAMAGED. WE SHOULD GIVE SERIOUS THOUGHT, HE ARGUED, TO A MORE ACTIVE AFRICAN POLICY, IN CONJUNCTION WITH EGYPT, DESIGNED TO CHALLENGE THE GROWING SOVIET ROLE IN AFRICA.

7. COMMENT: APART FROM THESE GENERAL COMMENTS, SADAT HAD NO SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS. EILTS

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NNN

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